

MULTIMEDIA



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STUDENT ID NO

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MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

FINAL EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 1, 2016/2017

LFE1017– FUNDAMENTALS OF ENGLISH

18 OCTOBER 2016

9.00 – 11.00 a.m.

(2 Hours)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT

1. This question paper consists of **FOUR** pages.
2. Answer **ALL** questions in **Sections A and B**.
3. Write all your answers in the Answer Booklet provided.

SECTION A: READING AND VOCABULARY [20 MARKS]

Instruction: Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

WHO botched Ebola But It's Winning Praise for Handling the Zika

- 1 The World Health Organization (WHO) was harshly criticized for its lackadaisical response in 2014 to the Ebola epidemic, which went on to kill more than 11,000 people and caused global panic. But less than a year after acknowledging its failures, the organization has reformed itself. With the Zika virus epidemic spreading explosively across the globe, WHO seems to be doing the right things. There is much we still don't know about Zika and how to stop it, but the WHO's response to the crisis has been remarkable. It shows how simple but crucial principles of crisis management can be applied at a massive scale. 5
- 2 The first principle of managing a crisis is to be prepared. In a report, analyzing the failed response to Ebola, a group of leading public-health experts concluded that "the most egregious failure was by WHO in the delay in *sounding the alarm*." It took nine months from the beginning of the outbreak for the organization to declare a global public-health emergency, during which time it ignored and even downplayed warnings from other health agencies and its own experts about the pace at which the virus was spreading across West Africa. That scathing criticism forced WHO to accept its failure publicly. "The global response to Zika has been much better than it was to Ebola," Jimmy Whitworth, an infectious-disease expert at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, told QUARTZ, a digital global business news publication. "This is in part because of WHO's reforms." 10 15 20
- 3 This time around, WHO declared a public-health emergency on Feb. 1, despite there still being many unknowns. Though this announcement too came nine months after the outbreak began, experts believe that in the case of Zika, that's early enough that a global response could be effective. This is because, though Zika spreads much faster than Ebola, it's mostly benign in adults. As many as four in five of those infected show no symptoms. Others suffer from rashes, fever, or joint pain, but quickly recover. 25
- 4 The Zika outbreak has been a highly visual global health crisis," Joshua Greenberg, an expert in risk communication at Carleton University, told Quartz. "Those images of babies born with severe birth defects helped create the conditions under which an emergency committee had to be convened." WHO's new emergency program includes an incident-management system, which helps it work across its own departments and regional partners much more quickly. On Feb. 16, WHO used this system to launch a comprehensive new report that details how the world can fight Zika over the next six months. 30 35
- 5 The second principle of managing a crisis is to communicate clearly. During the Ebola epidemic, even as WHO downplayed the risk of Ebola, it didn't effectively communicate two key things that would have helped with prevention: that the virus only spreads from person to person through bodily fluids, and that it spreads relatively slowly because it's less virulent than most known viruses. 40

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- 6 In the case of Zika, by contrast, very little was known about the virus. Because previous epidemics had not shown any signs of a connection to microcephaly or Guillain-Barré, it had not received much attention. Uncertainty is often used as an excuse to not communicate risks, Greenberg says; and even when there is communication, the advice tends to be weaker or even conflicting. But learning from its mistakes in Ebola, the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), a regional office of WHO, was quick to alert headquarters when the number of microcephaly cases started rising, despite there being no proven link. That is winning it praise from experts. 45
- 7 “WHO’s skillful embrace of uncertainty and the emergency committee’s adherence to transparency in accounting for how it reached the decision to recommend a public-health emergency declaration, represents a new high standard in risk communication,” Greenberg writes. WHO hasn’t confirmed the causal link to microcephaly, but it’s working under the assumption that there is one,” Whitworth told Quartz. “So the only things that will change if the causal link is established is that WHO will be in a stronger position to ask for funding and push the research agenda.” 55 60
- 8 Of course, such scientific uncertainty leaves scope for troublemakers to hijack the conversation. The most recent conspiracy theory, for instance, is that it may not be the Zika virus that is causing microcephaly, but a chemical used to kill mosquito larvae. “*Communicating uncertainty often undermines perceived expertise*,” writes Lisa Rosenbaum in the New England Journal of Medicine. “But if you don’t communicate uncertainty and end up being wrong, you risk losing even more credibility.” 65
- 9 The third principle of managing a crisis is to use resources well. The money to fight Ebola came late. *It was more luck* than anything, that by that time, the disease had begun to come under control. This failure prompted WHO to establish a \$100 million contingency fund. The fund is already being used to finance WHO’s initial fight against Zika. Apart from money, the greatest resource in fighting an epidemic is data. During the Ebola scare, there was no global framework for sharing the incidence and possible control of the disease, as well as clinical data among researchers and governmental agencies. Now WHO is putting such a mechanism in place. It involves creating standards for record-keeping of surveillance and diagnostic data, which can help ensure that health data can work across borders. It will also setup a repository for easy access to such data. 70 75 80
- 10 Of course, WHO cannot take all the credit for the global response to Zika. Small factors could have *tipped the balance*. For instance, if instead of Brazil, the outbreak had begun in a much poorer country, such as those in West Africa, or a poorer and bigger one such as Indonesia or India, the WHO’s leadership alone might not have sufficed. “Public-health services and funding for research is much higher in Brazil than in West Africa,” Whitworth told Quartz. “Undoubtedly that helped in having a better response, because WHO had a *stronger partner*.” Indeed, things could yet get worse. With Brazil’s mosquito season in full force and the northern hemisphere’s mosquito season due to begin before long, the disease might start to spread even more aggressively. 85 90

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- 11 Nevertheless, it's remarkable how fast a big bureaucracy like WHO has turned itself around. Almost all the improvements in WHO's capacity for dealing with outbreaks were made in the few months between the tail-end of the Ebola epidemic and the explosive start of the Zika outbreak. 95
- 12 Ebola is not over yet, Zika hasn't reached its peak, and soon there will be another epidemic. Our globalized world has created an excellent breeding ground for contagions to spread.

Adapted from: Akshat, R. (2016, February 24). *QUARTZ*. Retrieved from z.com/618286/the-world-health-organization-deserves-a-rare-applause-for-its-handling-of-the-terrifying-zika-epidemic

Question 1: Contextual Clues (6 marks)

Instruction: Provide a word from the reading passage for each definition below.

- | | | |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Example: Worthy of attention striking | (paragraph 1) | <u>remarkable</u> |
| a) severely scornful | (paragraph 2) | _____ |
| b) covering or involving much; of large scope. | (paragraph 4) | _____ |
| c) incompatible or at variance; contradictory | (paragraph 6) | _____ |
| d) the act of doing what is required by a rule, belief | (paragraph 7) | _____ |
| e) a natural or established process by which something takes place or is brought about | (paragraph 9) | _____ |
| f) continuous observation of an on-going activity. | (paragraph 9) | _____ |

Question II: Comprehension Questions (14 marks)

Instructions: Answer the following questions in complete sentence.

- a) What does sounding the alarm in line 13 refer to? (1 mark)
- b) Why is Zika considered to be a visual global crisis compared to Ebola? (1 mark)
- c) What was WHO transparent in when declaring Zika as a public health emergency? (2 marks)
- d) Explain Lisa Rosenbaum's statement in line 65, that "Communicating uncertainty often undermines perceived expertise." (2 marks)
- e) What is the writer implying in line 70 when he says that "it was more luck than anything"? (2 marks)

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- f) Explain the idiom *tipped the balance* in line 82. (1 mark)
- g) What is being referred to in line 88 as “the stronger partner?” (1 mark)
- h) There is a change in the writer’s tone in paragraphs 11 and 12. State and explain the tones in both the paragraphs (4 marks)

SECTION B: Writing. [30 MARKS]

Instruction: Answer ALL questions.

Question I. Narrative Writing. (15 marks)

Write a paragraph between **200–250** words using 10 direct quotations relating an encounter with a stranger that taught you something about people.

10 marks will be awarded for content and 5 marks for grammatically correct sentences.

Question II. Persuasive Essay (15 marks)

Taking a year off after graduating from the university can improve one's career prospects. Write a persuasive essay providing 3 arguments for the above topic. Your essay should be between **350 – 400** words.

10 marks will be awarded for content and 5 marks for grammatically correct sentences.

End of Paper